

**OCT Energy Summit, 15<sup>th</sup> of June at 11:10-11:30**

**Session 4: Advancing the EDF Thematic Programme (closed)**  
**11:10-11:30 Sustainable Energy in the EDF11 Territorial, Regional and**  
**Thematic Envelopes**

*{Welcome, Thanks}*

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to participate in this second edition of the Summit of Energy Ministers of Overseas Countries and Territories, which aims to guide OCTs' reflection on how to address the challenges they face in the energy sector and how to make the transition towards sustainability whilst achieving their economic potential.

*{Current Policy Framework}*

This period is marked by increased commitment by the international community regarding sustainability. This is clearly illustrated by the international agreement reached during the COP21 meeting last December in Paris, under the aegis of France. The ambition of this agreement makes it clear that addressing climate change and ensuring sustainability is an objective which transcends borders and unites us all in a common front.

Similarly, the Sustainable Development Goals adopted last September by the UN underline the link between development and sustainability and create a framework of cooperation which projects a broader and more inclusive approach to development, taking due account of the need to reduce the rate of climate change.

The European Union is in the forefront of this battle. As was already highlighted by DEVCO Deputy Director-General, Mrs Jager, yesterday, the provision of access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all is a priority in our international development efforts; the European Union will continue to actively support our partners' efforts towards the achievement of their sustainable energy objectives and targets.

Significantly, the Union is committed to allocating twenty percent of its resources to climate change-related actions. In many cases, we have even exceeded this marker. For example, in the Unit for coordination of Intra-ACP cooperation which I managed for over six years, we have increased our climate change and biodiversity expenses by fifty percent between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> EDF. This is an indication of the results that our common will to prioritise mutual interests can yield.

Sustainable energy is a prerequisite for growth. This is especially true in Overseas Countries and Territories, where reliance on imported fuel constitutes a major obstacle to economic development, and where energy is even more interlinked with climate change issues than in other parts of the world.

In this light, we can only welcome the continued commitment of OCTs to sustainable energy, which contributes to our common objectives.

I certainly hope that the discussions taking place during this Summit will facilitate the translation of policy commitments into action.

### ***{OCT Framework}***

The Council Decision on the association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Union ('Overseas Association Decision') acknowledges the importance of supporting your countries' and territories' efforts to become less dependent on fossil fuels, with a view to reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience.

Indeed, the OAD contains an entire chapter dedicated to cooperation in this realm, which exemplifies the significance we assign to this issue.

The latest edition of the OCT-EU Forum provided ample space for policy dialogue with the OCTs on Climate Change and Growth and Investment, issues that are intrinsically linked with sustainable energy. The discussions which took place during, and in the margins of, the Forum highlighted the mutual commitment to work together toward the sustainable development of OCTs.

Moreover, the signing of the Joint Declaration on reinforced cooperation in the field of sustainable energy between the Union and 22 OCTs, which took place in the margins of the Forum, strengthens the links between energy policy commitments of OCTs and the support provided by the Union.

It is now important to seize the occasion offered by this Summit in order to move the agenda forward.

### ***{Sustainable Energy in the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF for OCTs}***

The resources available to OCTs under the 11th EDF could play a crucial role in this process. Both the territorial and the regional allocations to which the OCTs are eligible under the 11th EDF provide an opportunity for undertaking large-scale actions that will promote the sustainable development and diversification of OCT economies, whilst increasing resilience.

This particular session, which aims to advance the programming process for the thematic, all-OCT programme, is therefore particularly important.

Under the framework of the 11th EDF-OCT resources, currently being programmed, sustainable energy has been proposed by OCTs as the concentration sector for several territorial and regional programmes.

Indeed, sustainable energy is an integral part of the territorial programmes of Curaçao (EUR 16,95 m), Saba (EUR 3,55 m) and Sint Eustatius (EUR 2,45 m).

In addition, two of the programmes to be financed in the framework of the regional allocation under the 11th EDF (the Thematic "all" OCTs programme with an indicative budget of up to EUR 18 million and the Caribbean OCTs regional programme with an indicative budget of up to EUR 40 million) include sustainable energy as one of their two components.

Similarly, the proposed sectors of concentration for the regional programmes for the Pacific and Indian Oceans include biodiversity and climate change. These choices are clearly complementary to the ones made under the thematic programme and reaffirm the full alignment with the policy priorities of the Union.

Given the number of stakeholders and the varying agendas of your countries and territories, it is well understood that these programmes are demanding in terms of coordination.

We are however confident that the numerous policy and strategy studies funded with EDF resources, our previous discussions during conferences and technical workshops organised explicitly for this purpose and our exchanges during the two last editions of the OCT-EU Forum will prove instrumental to your deliberations.

With regard to the thematic programme in particular, we welcome the priority hitherto assigned by OCTs to the promotion of knowledge in these sectors, the establishment of policies and strategies including indicators for measuring progress and the facilitation of the implementation of relevant roadmaps, as well as the selection of pertinent pilot projects.

What we expect from you are proposals for targeted actions that will respond to clear needs assessments whilst ensuring the optimal impact of the support provided by the Union.

At the same time, we encourage your Governments to benefit from the other instruments available to OCTs, as recalled yesterday by Mrs Jager, and foster synergies between the funding that may be granted via the different sources *{whilst avoiding duplication}*, namely the EU Technical Assistance Facility for the Sustainable Energy for All initiative and ElectriFI.

### ***{Timeline}***

Subsequent months will be critical for the programming process.

According to your programme, the draft Summary Sheet for the thematic programme should be endorsed by your governments as a result of this Summit.

Substantial effort was put into coordination among OCTs through successive consultations, electronically as well as in person, through the various workshops and meetings organised.

We congratulate OCTA for the effective and efficient work undertaken in the course of this period, as well as for the mobilisation of OCTs, which should result in a document that encompasses the main areas of concern for all OCTs and seeks to address common challenges in a comprehensive manner.

Following the submission of the Summary Sheet to the Commission, the programming process must be accelerated.

The EU Response Strategy, which should address both the sustainable energy and the climate change components, should advance swiftly, building on the dialogue you have had so far. A draft of the EU response Strategy should be submitted for the consideration of Commission services no later than October 2016.

After this phase, it will be important to pursue the reflection on the identification and formulation of the actions that will be undertaken in the context of the programme with the

same determination, in order to come up with concrete proposals that have added value, are feasible, realistic and sustainable.

In view of facilitating this process, the Commission is ready to recruit Technical Assistance to help OCTA in its role as Regional Authorising Officer, once OCTA submits a final version of the relevant Terms of Reference. The Technical Assistance will provide the necessary expertise to accompany you throughout this process.

But of course the Technical Assistance cannot substitute for your Governments and administrations. The programming process is your responsibility and it is only through your active participation in this process that we can ensure ownership of this programme. Your commitment will thus be indispensable and your contribution to this process vital, in view of establishing common priorities, with due account for the diversity of challenges and opportunities you are faced with.

*{Closing, thanks}*

We count your Governments to collaborate closely in order to come up, in a timely manner, with proposals for efficient solutions that will allow your populations to rip the benefits of the resources available via the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF for OCTs.

I certainly hope that the next edition of the OCT-EU Forum will constitute a landmark, signalling the culmination of the programming process and the beginning of implementation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your attention.